

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS COLOMBO 001915

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DS FOR DS/IP/NEA/SA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ASEC CE CMGT

SUBJECT: EAC HELD TO DISCUSS POLITICAL SITUATION IN COLOMBO

¶1. (SBU) Summary - Embassy Colombo held an EAC meeting on Nov 5 to discuss the security situation relative to the Sri Lankan President's actions in recent days. EAC reaffirmed that, aside from increased police and army presence dispersed lightly throughout the city, Colombo remains calm and without incident to date. A determination was made for CONS to issue a Consular Message to assure the American community that the Embassy is monitoring political and security developments in Sri Lanka. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Embassy Colombo held an EAC meeting on Nov 5 to discuss the security situation and political upheaval caused by Sri Lankan President Kumaratunga's firing of the Ministers of Defense, Interior, and Communications, suspending Parliament until November 19, and declaring a State of Emergency. The EAC noted that the situation in Colombo remains calm with no incidents of violence or unrest reported to date. RSO advised that the SD Unit has been strategically deployed in the city to monitor security developments. Increased police and army presence has been reported in certain parts of the city, but Embassy operations have not been affected. POL advised that political ramifications of the President's actions could not yet be determined, and in fact, a complete picture may not be understood for several weeks. DAO advised that his Sri Lankan military contacts have informed him that the officer corps is committed to following the rule of law. Embassy tripwires were established, the first of which would be a security incident or indication of unrest in the streets. The EAC concluded that Embassy operations would continue as normal until the security situation changed.

¶3. (SBU) Charge' instructed CONS to draft a Consular Message for distribution to the American community. The text of the message is as follows:

"As you are probably aware from news reports, there have been a number of political developments in Sri Lanka in recent days. The U.S. Embassy in Colombo will continue to monitor ongoing events. The Consular Section's email messaging system is our primary method of communicating with Americans in Sri Lanka. Please ensure that your registration information is current, and as always, we urge you to be cautious and aware of your surroundings."

¶4. (U) Additional EACs will be convened as necessary.

ENTWISTLE